

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9745

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 0708

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XM, AR, US

SUBJECT: POSTPONEMENT OF BA MFM

REF: A. BA 0657, B. BA 0359 AND C. BRASILIA 0786

1. IN INFORMAL DISCUSSION WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS YESTERDAY (JAN 29) REGARDING POSTPONEMENT OF MFM, LATTER SAID VIGNES HAD FOUND HIMSELF IN QUANDRY. BY JAN 23 IT WAS BECOMING EVIDENT THAT VENEZUELA, ECUADOR AND PERHAPS OTHERS WOULD PERSIST IN DECISION NOT TO ATTEND MFM BECAUSE OF TRA. FURTHER, BRAZIL WAS GIVING STRONG INDICATIONS THAT IT WOULD NOT ATTEND IF CUBA CAME, WHILE MEXICO HAD LAST WEEK ANNOUNCED THAT IT WOULD NOT ATTEND IF CUBA DID NOT COME. IT WAS AT THIS POINTN THEY SUGGESTED, THAT VIGNES CONCLUDED GAME WAS UP AND THAT WITH REACTION TO TRA ON TOP OF CUBAN ATTENDANCE ISSUE, WHICH IT BEGAN TO APPEAR HE COULD NOT FINESE, HE HAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO POSTPONE UNTIL THESE TWO ISSUES COULD BE DEFUSED.

2. OFFICIALS EXPRESSED OPINION THAT EVEN THOUGH BOTH ISSUES HAD PLAYED ROLE IN POSTPONEMENT, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN "INCONVENIENT" TO REFER TO CUBA; HENCE, VIGNES PUBLICLY ATTRIBUTED ACTION ONLY TO TRA AFTERMATH.

3. REASONING GIVEN ABOVE STRIKES US AS ENTIRELY PLAUSIBLE.

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WE ARE UNCLEAR ON ONE ASPECT, HOWEVER. FOREIGN MINISTRY

OFFICIALS HERE HAVE FOR PAST TWO WEEKS CONSISTENTLY REFERRED TO BRAZILIAN POSITION AGAINST ATTENDANCE IF CUBA INVITED, AND ON JAN 14 VIGNES FLATLY STATED TO AMBASSADOR HILL AND MAILLIARD THAT BRAZILIANS HAD TOLD HIM THEY WOULD NOT COME IF CUBA DID (SEE REF B). IF THIS WAS IN FACT THE BRAZILIAN POSITION, MEXICAN PRESS STATEMENT OF JAN 23 CONFIRMING POSITION STATED BY ALEJO IN CUBA WOULD INDEED HAVE PLACED VIGNES IN MOST DIFFICULT POSITION. WE NOTE IN REF C, HOWEVER, THAT IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR CRIMMINS, FOREIGN MINISTER SILVEIRA INDICATED HE HAD REPEATEDLY TOLD VIGNES BRAZIL WOULD ATTEND MFM. EACH COUNTRY IS OF COURSE PREDISPOSED TO ATTRIBUTE CULPABILITY ON ANY ISSUE TO THE OTHER. WITH THIS IN MIND, WE WONDER IF EMBASSY BRASILIA HAS ANY EVIDENCE WHICH WOULD CONFIRM OR DENY BRAZILIAN POSITION DESCRIBED BY VIGNES, OR WHICH MIGHT OTHERWISE SHED SOME LIGHT ON APPARENT DISCREPANCIES IN ATTITUDES TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS ARE ATTRIBUTING TO ONE ANOTHER?
HILL

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